

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

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INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

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FM AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6690

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRASILIA 6016

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, AO, US, BR

SUBJECT: BRAZILIAN CONTACT WITH ANGOLAN LEADERS

REF: STATE 164494

1. DCM AND POLOFF CALLED ON ITALO ZAPPA, HEAD OF FOREIGN MINISTRY'S DEPARTMENT FOR AFRICA, ASIA AND OCEANIA. ZAPPA CONFIRMED THAT BRAZILIAN AMBASSADOR MET WITH ANGOLA INTERIOR MINISTER NITO ALVES ON JUNE 17. HE SAID THAT THE CALL HAD BEEN A FORMAL ONE AND PART OF A SERIES OF COURTESY CALLS ON VARIOUS MINISTERS. ZAPPA SAID HE HAD READ THE AMBASSADOR'S REPORT OF THE MEETING AND THAT CONVERSATION HAD BEEN RATHER GENERAL, AS WAS TO BE EXPECTED IN SUCH A SITUATION. ALVES ASKED FOR SOME BOOKS WHICH ZAPPA DESCRIBED AS TEHCNICAL (ADMINISTRATION, ECONOMICS, ETC.) WHICH FOREIGN MINISTRY HAD FORWARDED TO ANGOLA FOR DELIVERY TO HIM.

2. ZAPPA SAID THAT FOREIGN MINISTRY KNOWS THAT ALVES IS AN IMPORTANT AND "VERY SPECIAL" LEADER IN THE MPLA. HE SAID THAT IT IS HIS PERSONAL IMPRESSION THAT IF ALVES HEADS OR IS PART OF SOME FACTION WITHIN THE MPLA IT IS BASED ON RACIAL GROUNDS. HE NOTED THAT EARLY IN THE 19TH CENTURY THE BLACKS IN HAITI HAD THROWN OUT THE MULATTOES THAT HAD BEEN DOMINANT SINCE INDEPENDENCE. ZAPPA SAID THAT IT IS CONCEIVABLE THAT SUCH A THING COULD HAPPEN IN AFRICA WITH
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ALVES BEING PART OF A BLACK GROUP WHICH WOULD REPRESS OR

NUDGE OUT MULATTOES SUCH AS AGOSTINHO NETO AND WHITES. HE NOTED THAT AT LEAST THREE MINISTERS IN THE ANGOLAN GOVERNMENT ARE WHITE OR NEARLY SO. ZAPPA SAID THAT OTHER OBSERVERS BELIEVE THERE ARE IDEOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN NETO AND ALVES. IN HIS VIEW, IF THESE EXIST, THEY ARE SUBORDINATE TO THE RACIAL ISSUE INsofar AS A POSSIBILITY OF A BREAK WITH NETO IS CONCERNED. ZAPPA ALSO MENTIONED THAT SOME BELIEVE THAT ALVES IS CLOSE TO THE SOVIETS. HE NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT UNTIL ALVES' RECENT VISIT TO THE SOVIET UNION HE HAD GENERALLY BEEN CONSIDERED ANTI-SOVIET.

3. ZAPPA SAID THAT THERE ARE DISAGREEMENTS WITHIN THE MPLA AS THERE ARE WITHIN ANY POLITICAL PARTY. HE ALSO SAID HE DOES NOT BELIEVE IT LIKELY THAT NETO WILL BE OVERTHROWN BECAUSE NETO IS THE SYMBOL THAT HOLDS THE MPLA TOGETHER. SHOULD NETO BE OVERTHROWN OR KILLED, HOWEVER, ZAPPA BELIEVES THAT MPLA CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEMBER LUCIO LARA, WOULD BE HIS MOST LIKELY SUCCESSOR.

4. ZAPPA RETURNED FROM VISIT TO GUINEA-BISSAU AND THE CAPE VERDE ISLANDS ABOUT WEEK AGO AND SAID HE HAD BEEN IMPRESSED BY THE APPARENT LACK OF RACIAL TENSION OR PREJUDICE THERE EVEN WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT. HE REMARKED ON THE EXTREME POVERTY THERE AND REMARKED THAT BRAZIL WAS TRYING IN ITS SMALL WAY TO BE OF ASSISTANCE. HE POINTED OUT THAT BRAZIL HAS NEITHER THE RESOURCES NOR THE CAPABILITY TO ESTABLISH AN AID PROGRAM. IT DOES HAVE AN EXCESS OF BOOKS AND EXPERTS IN THE TEACHING PROFESSION WHICH IT COULD MAKE AVAILABLE TO HELP THE FORMER PORTUGUESE COLONIES IN AFRICA. HE SAID THAT ANY BRAZILIAN ASSISTANCE TO THESE NEW NATIONS WOULD BE OF A VERY BASIC SORT APPLICABLE TO THEIR IMMEDIATE PROBLEMS. HE SAID, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT IT WAS FAR MORE IMPORTANT TO TEACH THOSE PEOPLE IMPROVED METHODS OF RICE CULTIVATION THAN IT WAS TO BUILD A FANCY RESORT CENTER ON A DESERT ISLAND SUCH AS THE SWEDES HAD RECENTLY DONE IN GUINEA-BISSAU. HE MUSED ABOUT THE "COMPULSIVE PHILANTHROPY" OF THE SWEDES AND SAID HE WONDERED WHY, WITH ALL THEIR RHETORIC ABOUT HELPING THE THIRD WORLD, THEY HAD CONCEIVED OF THIS RESORT CENTER WHICH

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WAS SO CLEARLY A WHITE ELEPHANT.
CRIMMINS

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